

DUBUQUE COUNTY LIBRARY
COURT HOUSE
DUBUQUE, IOWA

February 8th, 1951.

Miss Elizabeth Hage,
County Librarian,
Scott County Library,
Eldridge, Iowa.

Dear Miss Hage:

Thank you for all the material you have sent about your county set-up. At present I have a few more questions again. How many members on your board of Trustees? How often do you meet? time date and hour? When the board first meets they draw lots for length of term, then they elect a chairman and secretary-- also a vice-chairman? or who takes over if the chairman cannot come? Under no 5 in the manual "County Libraries for Iowa" it states that the board selects books etc. don't you make the selection of the books and supplies. I know that when it comes to large purchases one would need the boards approval before considering the buying. I understand that the board approves the bills and salaries, the orders are signed by the President and the Secretary (do you have a copy of your library orders? if so may we have a copy?) all bills need claims attached is the above correct? Auditor writes the warrants and Librarian signs for same and sends them out. The Librarian keeps the books.

Miss Buskirk suggested a meeting of county librarians in Des Moines sometime. I hope that it will be later in the year when the going is easier. I broke my ankle in December and still ride all over. Perhaps we could have it with the ILA meeting in October.

I wish that we could see your set up and talk things over personally it might be possible later. Our new board of trustees is in the making and maybe appointed any day.

Thank you for your time and help.

Very truly yours,

Catherine

Catherine M. Seitz, County Librarian.

Eldridge, Iowa
February 12, 1951

Miss Catherine M. Seitz, Librarian
Dubuque County Library
Court House
Dubuque, Iowa

Dear Catherine:

In reply to your letter of February 8, I'll just go right down the line on the questions. We have nine people on our board, 6 men and 3 women - that, of course, is up to the board of supervisors in making the appointments. If you have anything to say about the number of members on the board, make it as few as possible - the law allows for 5, 7, or 9. It's much easier to get a quorum with a smaller board. Our board meets once a month - the first Thursday after the first Monday of the month. If there is important business that comes up making another meeting necessary, a special meeting may be called. I'll send you a copy of our by-laws which I think will be a help to you. They were drawn up by the library board before I arrived, and, I think are a very good set of by-laws. Yes, at their first meeting, the board members drew lots for the 2-year, 4-year, and 6-year terms - three each. They elected a president, vice-president, and secretary. All our bills are paid by the county auditor after they're o.k'd by the library board. I get pads of claims similar to the enclosed from the auditor's office - they are given to us - and list the bills - one claim for each company, and attach copies of all invoices to the claim. I make out the claims in duplicate, and attach duplicate invoices to them, so that I have a copy of everything in my files, too. The originals go to the auditor's office for payment. They mail out the checks from there. That is for the auditor's office to decide - whether they want to mail them or give them to you to be mailed. Then, since the state library law states that the library board shall have sole control of library funds, our bills do not go through the meetings of the board of supervisors. We have had printed, at our expense, books of the other slip (I don't know what the legal term for it would be) which I've attached to the claim. I make out one of these for each company to whom we wish to have a check mailed and attach it along with the invoices to the claim. We have the stubs in our books.

I do all the book selection. I suppose if the library board cared to become officious they could have a finger in the buying; however, I would not then be the librarian. I looked into such matters before taking the position. Of course, they may criticize and suggest. I welcome that sort of thing if it doesn't get out of hand. After all, a board hires a librarian to administer the library for them, and buying books and supplies is one of the duties of administration. In the purchase of equipment, we have a board committee with whom I confer and to whom I make recommendations. They in turn are authorized by the board to go along with my recommendations or to reject them, as they see fit. That's on items such as desks, typewriters, tables, etc. Library supplies I buy without consulting anyone. It has been my policy in the past, and I have found it to be true of other librarians, that any single item amounting to more than \$100. 00 which has to be bought, the board or the committee of the board should be consulted. The county treasurer, of course, keeps books on the library account. I, of course, keep my own set of books, so I know where we stand at all times, too. The income figures I have to get from the treasurer periodically. I believe that answers the questions asked. Please feel free to write asking questions at any time. It may take me a while to answer; but I'll get at it as soon as possible.

I attended the mid-winter meeting of ALA in Chicago a week ago, and got a lot out of it. One thing accomplished was the placement of an order for a new bookmobile. I was afraid that perhaps present conditions might make it impossible for us to have a new one; but that is not the case, thank goodness.

I was very sorry to hear that you'd broken your ankle. Your work is difficult enough without having broken bones to contend with, too. I hope that it is mending satisfactorily. In regard to a meeting in Des Moines; I shall try to pull that off as long as possible, too. I feel that I'd like to go out to Woodbury County to see their bookmobile. Mr. Wier suggested that it would be a good idea for me to see that one, because he thinks it's one of the best they've built for the type of service to be given; so I'll have a chance then to talk over Miss Huskirk's problems with her, if she has any; which she apparently does have from the sound of her letter.

And now we come to a very serious threat to our good county library law. Have you heard anything about it? It's quite possible that it may never get out of committee. In that case you need do nothing about it; but if it does get out of committee before the Senate and the House, then we'll all have to be ready to jump in with what we have and fight the thing tooth and nail, so I'll give you the background on

It seems that the town of Correctionville in Woodbury County does not wish to be part of the county library set-up. They have tried to get out of the organization but the present law provides no way in which it can be accomplished. So the people of Correctionville, it would seem, have gone to their Woodbury County representatives in both houses of the legislature and had them introduce a bill which I now quote

"...Whenever any city, town, or district, being a part of the County Library District, shall decide to withdraw from the County Library District, it may do so by giving notice by registered mail to the Board of Library Trustees of said county library and the county auditor prior to July 10, by the governing body of said city, town, or district of its withdrawal from the county library district, and thereafter said city, town, or district, shall cease to be a part of or included in said county library district." Isn't that something? The House File number on it is HF 143. It is now before the Schools Committee of the House. At the moment, I think we have the thing under control. I talked with our Scott County man, Fred Schwengel, on Saturday (you may remember that he introduced the bounty library law and worked hard to have it passed). He's on the Schools committee of the House, and will act as a watch-dog for us. However, if it gets out of control, I'll pass the word on you and you be ready to muster all sorts of protest in the form of great numbers of letters from Dubuque County people to your own legislators. That is not necessary at this time, however.

That takes care of things up to the moment, I believe. Good luck, and I repeat, feel free to call on me at any time.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth B. Hage, Librarian
SCOTT COUNTY LIBRARY